63d Congress, 2d Session. } HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES. { Document No. 1180.

COEUR D'ALENE RIVER, IDAHO.

LETTER

FROM

THE SECRETARY OF WAR,

TRANSMITTING,

WITH A LETTER FROM THE CHIEF OF ENGINEERS, REPORT ON PRELIMINARY EXAMINATION OF COEUR D'ALENE RIVER, IDAHO.

October 19, 1914.—Referred to the Committee on Rivers and Harbors and ordered to be printed.

War Department,
Washington, October 14, 1914.

The Speaker of the House of Representatives.

Sir: I have the honor to transmit herewith a letter from the Chief of Engineers, United States Army, dated 13th instant, together with copy of report from Maj. J. B. Cavanaugh, Corps of Engineers, dated June 30, 1914, on preliminary examination of Coeur d'Alene River, Idaho, made by him in compliance with the provisions of the rivers and harbors act approved March 4, 1913.

Very respectfully,

Lindley M. Garrison,
Secretary of War.

War Department,
Office of the Chief of Engineers,
Washington, October 13, 1914.

From: The Chief of Engineers, United States Army.
To: The Secretary of War.
Subject: Preliminary examination of Coeur d'Alene River, Idaho.

1. There is submitted herewith, for transmission to Congress, report dated June 30, 1914, by Maj. J. B. Cavanaugh, Corps of Engineers, on preliminary examination of Coeur d'Alene River, Idaho, called for by the river and harbor act approved March 4, 1913.

27A

2. The Coeur d'Alene River is formed by the junction of the North and South Forks near Enaville in north-central Idaho and flows in a general westerly direction for 35 miles, emptying into Lake Coeur d'Alene at Harrison, Idaho. It is navigable from its mouth to the forks, the width varying from 200 to 400 feet and the depth from 15 to 40 feet. It is reported that shoaling of the river has occurred as a result of deposits caused by mining operations along the forks, but it appears that as yet no interference with navigation has resulted from these deposits, and none is probable in the near future. Since the present channels are adequate for present and immediately prospective commerce, the district officer is of opinion that the improvement of this stream for the benefit of navigation is not worthy of being undertaken by the United States at the present time. The division engineer concurs in this opinion.

3. This report has been referred, as required by law, to the Board of Engineers for Rivers and Harbors, and attention is invited to its report herewith, dated September 15, 1914, concurring in the views of the district officer and the division engineer.

4. After due consideration of the above-mentioned reports, I concur in the views of the district officer, the division engineer, and the Board of Engineers for Rivers and Harbors, and therefore report that the improvement by the United States of Coeur d'Alene River, Idaho, is not deemed advisable at the present time.

Dan C. Kingman,
Chief of Engineers, United States Army.

REPORT OF THE BOARD OF ENGINEERS FOR RIVERS AND HARBORS.

[Third indorsement.]

Board of Engineers for Rivers and Harbors,
September 15, 1914.

The Chief of Engineers, United States Army:

1. The following is submitted in review of the district officer's report on preliminary examination of Coeur d'Alene River, Idaho, authorized by the river and harbor act of March 4, 1913.

2. This river is a tributary of Lake Coeur d'Alene, Idaho. It is navigable throughout its length of 35 miles, the width ranging from about 200 to 400 feet, and the depth from 15 to 40 feet. The river is crossed by several fixed bridges, none of which have been authorized by War Department permits. The North and South Forks forming the river are mountainous streams and bring down quantities of sand and gravel, but as yet the deposits have not interfered with the navigable capacity of the river.

3. During the excursion season in the summer there is some passenger traffic and also a small local freight traffic on launches and other small boats. The important item of commerce, however, is logs, amounting to about 35,000,000 feet, which are floated down to mills on the river.

4. The district officer states that a number of parties thought to be interested in the improvement were requested to give information as to the improvement desired, etc., and that only one reply was received, which stated that there was no regular traffic on the

river except log driving, and that no improvements are needed. Complaints are made by riparian owners on account of damages caused by floods and by deposits of ore slimes discharged into the stream from concentrating mills.

5. In view of the fact that the channel is entirely adequate for present and immediate prospective commerce, the district officer reports that no improvement of the river is required for navigation, and therefore that it is not worthy of being undertaken by the United States. In this view the division engineer concurs.

6. Interested parties were informed of the unfavorable report of the district officer and given an opportunity of submitting their views to the board, but no communications on the subject have been received.

7. It is clear from the report of the district officer that the navigable capacity of the Coeur d'Alene River is ample to meet all present and reasonably prospective demands of commerce. The board therefore concurs with the district officer and the division engineer and reports that in its opinion it is not advisable for the General Government to undertake the improvement of the Coeur d'Alene River, Idaho, at this time.

8. In compliance with law, the board reports that there are no questions of terminal facilities, waterpower, or other related subjects which could be coordinated with the suggested improvement in such manner as to render the work advisable in the interests of commerce and navigation.

For the board:

Frederic V. Abbot,
Colonel, Corps of Engineers,
Senior Member Present.

PRELIMINARY EXAMINATION OF COEUR D'ALENE RIVER, IDAHO.

United States Engineer Office,
Seattle, Wash., June 30, 1914.

From: The District Engineer Officer.
To: The Chief of Engineers, United States Army
(Through the Division Engineer).
Subject: Preliminary examination of Coeur d'Alene River, Idaho.

1. In compliance with act of Congress dated March 4, 1913, I have the honor to submit the following report of the preliminary examination of Coeur d'Alene River, Idaho, with map,[1] as required.

2. The examination of the river was made in April of 1914 by Capt. A. R. Ehrnbeck, Corps of Engineers, and the map has been compiled from existing maps.

3. The Coeur d'Alene River is formed by the junction of the North and South Forks near Enaville in north central Idaho, and flows in a general westerly direction for 35 miles, emptying into Lake Coeur d'Alene at Harrison, Idaho, in latitude 47° 25′ N., and longitude 116° 50′ W.

The North Fork rises in about latitude 47° 45′ N., longitude 116° W., and flows in a southwesterly direction about 30 miles to the forks.

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[1] Not printed.

The South Fork rises in about latitude 47° 30′ N., longitude 115° 55′ W., and flows westerly about 20 miles to the forks.

The river is navigable for boats to the forks, 35 miles from its mouth.

Both the North and South Forks flow through very rugged mountainous country and are swift mountain streams, running for the most part in deep, narrow gorges.

The stream beds and banks are composed of rock, gravel, and sandy loam. The flats are covered with gravelly bars and deposits left by the floods. No navigation is possible on these streams except the floating of logs during high stages.

From the forks to its mouth the Coeur d'Alene River is a deep, sluggish stream, varying in width (at medium stage) from 200 to 400 feet and in depth from 15 to 40 feet. The stream is admirably adapted to navigation and was formerly used by the larger class of Coeur d'Alene Lake steamers up as far as Cataldo, just below the forks. This river, like the St. Joe, the other navigable tributary of Lake Coeur d'Alene, is practically an arm of the lake for many miles above its mouth. The river valley is one-half to 2 miles wide, and is generally flat and marshy, with abrupt hills on both sides. Between the river and the hills there are numerous lakes and during high water the river and these lakes are merged, agricultural lands on the flats are overflowed, and the valley becomes one expanse of water.

The area of the Coeur d'Alene River drainage basin is about 1,300 square miles, and the estimated discharge of the river varies from 500 second-feet at low water to 12,000 second-feet at high water. The North and South Forks are about the same size, and it is estimated that they each carry about 500 second-feet of water during medium stages.

4. Floods are due to melting snows in the mountains and generally occur during April, May, and June. Low stages occur in the dry season, from July to September, inclusive.

5. From near Dudley, Idaho, to the mouth the lumber industries have constructed numerous booms, which in places occupy fully one-half the width of the stream, but the narrowest unobstructed channel is not less than 75 feet.

6. All the bridges crossing the navigable portion of the river are of fixed span. One near the mouth has a clear opening of 100 feet and 30 feet clearance at high stage of river. Four other bridges, each of about 60 feet clear span and 25 feet clearance above high water, are located, respectively, at Springston, Lane, Rose Lake, and Dudley. A fixed span of about 80 feet clear opening and 3 feet clearance above high water crosses the river near Cataldo and forms an effectual barrier to boat navigation. None of these structures are authorized by proper War Department permits.

7. The river in flood carries large quantities of sand and gravel in its upper reaches and also a large amount of mine waste, tailings, and slimes from concentrating mills. The finer particles or slimes from these mills are carried throughout the year, the concentrating process being that of agitated settling of the stamped lead and silver ores in riffles or concentrator tables. Almost the entire low-water flow of the South Fork is conducted through each mill successively, to be used in this settling process, and the finely powdered

rock and a small amount of the metals (especially lead) are carried away by the water. The material in suspension gives the river a milky appearance, which extends some distance into the lake. Dikes have been constructed along a great part of the river from Cataldo to the mouth, but these dikes only give protection against ordinary flood stages. Due to the fact that the Washington Water Power Co. maintains the level of Lake Coeur d'Alene considerably above its former flood stages by the use of its power dam on the Spokane River at Post Falls, Idaho, the back waters in time of flood now overtop those dikes in the lower reaches of the river and the receding flood waters leave a deposit on the vegetation of fields and meadows, which, it is claimed by the settlers along the river, contains sufficient lead to poison their horses in a few months and render worthless the hay which was formerly one of the most important products of the valley.

8. Shoaling of the entire river below Enaville is reported to have occurred since the opening of the mines on the South Fork, due to the tailings from these mines, which are directly discharged into the stream or washed in by high water. As yet no interference with navigation has resulted from these deposits, and none is probable in the near future. Therefore no interference with mining operations is at the present time required for the protection of navigation.

9. The pollution of the waters of the river is contrary to the laws of the State of Idaho, and redress for any damage done to lands of the settlers in the river valley by floods and poisoned river waters should be obtained through the State courts. However, as the mining industry is of vital importance to the State, no action has been taken by the State authorities to prevent these deposits or otherwise interfere with the operations of the mines and concentrator mills.

10. During the excursion season in summer a steamer runs as far up the river as Dudley, Idaho, and there is also a small local traffic carried on in launches and other small boats between ranchers and stores at different points along the river. The important traffic, however, is in logs, about 35,000,000 feet of valuable white pine being run each season during the spring floods, most of the logs coming from the North Fork, which is at present unaffected by mining operations.

11. Complaints have been received from various settlers along the river that stretches of the stream immediately above Dudley, Idaho, were closed to navigation entirely by reason of log jams. Log driving companies find it convenient to sort the logs for the different mills by using the river current, and since the driving season is of short duration and it is necessary to drive all the logs for the year's cut during the spring floods, the entire width of the stream is used in places as a storage basin or boom, the logs being released and sorted as desired. This jamming of the river has occurred each spring and summer since 1911, and has not only cut off navigation through the jammed section, but has probably aggravated the flood conditions in the valley above the jam. The settlers claim that it is impossible for them to plant their fields early enough in the

season to assure harvesting of crops before the fall rains set in. Steps are now being taken to prevent such jams in the future.

12. The most important towns in the Coeur d'Alene Valley are Harrison (population, 1,500), at the mouth of the river; Rose Lake (population, 100); Dudley (population, 50); and Cataldo (population, 50), at 21, 24, and 30 miles, respectively, above the mouth.

13. The principal products of the valley are lead and silver ores and concentrates, lumber, hay, and a small number of cattle and hogs. Lumber mills are situated at Dudley, Rose Lake, Lane, and Harrison, Idaho. Outgoing shipments are chiefly ore, lumber, and hay; the inbound shipments being made up of mining machinery, food supplies, coal, building materials, and general merchandise. Practically all of this freight moves by rail. A branch line of the Oregon-Washington Railroad & Navigation Co. occupies the right bank of the main river throughout its length and follows up the South Fork to Mullan, Idaho, where connection is made with a branch line of the Northern Pacific Railway. A second branch follows up the North Fork also.

14. A circular letter[1] was sent from this office April 23, 1914, to the Chambers of Commerce of Harrison, Coeur d'Alene, and Wallace, Idaho, and Spokane, Wash., and to the navigation companies using the stream, the Red Collar Steamship Co., and Coeur d'Alene & St. Joe Transportation Co., and to the lumber mills along the stream, requesting information as to desired improvements, present uses of the stream, water and rail rates, etc. No replies were received except from the Rose Lake Lumber Co., Rose Lake, Idaho, which expresses the opinion that no improvements are needed, and states that there is no regular traffic on the Coeur d'Alene River except log driving. (Copy of this letter is herewith.)

15. Docks are located at Harrison and at the lumber mills along the stream. These docks are adequate for their purpose and are served by the railroad for transfer and interchange of freight and passenger traffic. There appears to be no monopoly of wharf frontage.

16. Since the present navigable channels of the Coeur d'Alene River, Idaho, are entirely adequate for present and immediately prospective commerce, I have to report that the improvement of the Coeur d'Alene River, Idaho, for the benefit of navigation is not required and that therefore, in my opinion, such work is not worthy of being undertaken by the United States at the present time.

17. Neither the developments of water power nor the control of floods can be combined with any improvement for navigation so as to render such improvement advisable. While, as above stated, the valley of the Coeur d'Alene is subject to serious damage from floods, and measures for their prevention are highly desirable, no such work is necessary to preserve the navigable capacity of the river.

J. B. CAVANAUGH,
Major, Corps of Engineers.

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[1] Not printed.

[First indorsement.]

United States Engineer Office,
Northern Pacific Division,
Portland, Oreg., July 21, 1914.

To Chief of Engineers:

Forwarded. Concurring in the opinion expressed in paragraph 16 of the district officer's report.

C. H. McKinstry,
Lieut. Col., Corps of Engineers.

[For Report of the Board of Engineers for Rivers and Harbors see page 2.]

LETTER OF THE ROSE LAKE LUMBER CO. (LTD.).

Rose Lake Lumber Co. (Ltd.),
Rose Lake, Idaho, April 25, 1914.

Dear Sir: Replying to your letter of April 23, in which you inquire about the improvements desired on the Coeur d'Alene River, also regarding lumber traffic and other traffic on the Coeur d'Alene River.

We wish to advise that our judgment is as follows: The tonnage of traffic carried by boats on the Coeur d'Alene River is very little, or nothing. As to this information; that is, the information as regards the amount of tonnage carried, could best be obtained from the Coeur d'Alene & St. Joe Transportation Co., whose head office is at Coeur d'Alene, Idaho. They are the only people that operate a boat on the Coeur d'Alene River for freight purposes, and they have never operated above Dudley, Idaho. The only other concerns or people operating boats on the Coeur d'Alene River are the different lumber companies, who have logs coming down the river each year.

As regards the amount of lumber traffic on the Coeur d'Alene River, would say that this varies in different years, but in the last three years it has reached from thirty to thirty-five million per year. During the past several months the Coeur d'Alene & St. Joe Transportation Co., of Coeur d'Alene, Idaho, have not been operating a boat on the Coeur d'Alene River, and for that reason there has been no traffic of any kind on the Coeur d'Alene River, either freight or passenger.

As you know, there are, and always have been, some pleasure boats on the Coeur d'Alene River, but there have never been any boats operated on the Coeur d'Alene River for freight or passenger purposes where fares were charged, excepting by the Coeur d'Alene & St. Joe Transportation Co., and, as stated above, we believe that you can get all of the information as regards rates, etc., from the Coeur d'Alene & St. Joe Transportation Co. If we can be of any further help to you in getting information regarding this matter, kindly address us again.

Yours, very truly,

W. S. Rosenberry, *Manager.*

Maj. J. B. Cavanaugh,
Corps of Engineers.